RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

January, 1997

232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

A VERY SUCCESSFUL RNA HOLIDAY SEASON

RNA would like to thank its members, neighbors and friends for making this holiday season a happy and healthy one. Our annual food and toy drive was the most successful one yet with members filling 24 shopping bags of food and eight bags of toys. These gifts were donated to the Salvation Army for distribution throughout the holiday season.

Members relaxed and enjoyed each other's company at our holiday party on December 10th. Everyone brought a variety of homemade food and desserts to sample. We had several guests including our local

(continued on page two)

T'is the season to do a good deed:

If you have any left-over holiday spirit, consider spending some time with one of your senior citizen neighbors, just to say hello or maybe to help them with a chore or shopping. The winter limits our seniors from getting around as much as they would like. Remember to shovel their walks during the next snow storm.

Also, please consider volunteering at the Harbor View Health Care Center. A short visit, a conversation or a game with one of the residents will brighten their day. [See article on Franciscan Parkside Cntr. on page two.]

JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN RNA

RNA is looking for several individuals interested in doing work for the community.

The first position available is that of park attendant for Riverview-Fisk Park, who would be responsible for park maintenance and supervision of park projects. The person would be hired by the Department of Public Works as a seasonal worker at $8.00/hour for twenty hours a week. We are presently interviewing people for this position and hope to make a recommendation to the DPW within the next month. RNA would like to have an individual in place for the spring of 1997.

RNA is also looking for an assistant editor for its monthly newsletter. This is a non-paying volunteer position.

Anyone interested in applying for either position, should come to the next meeting or contact RNA.

PALISADE AVE. TREESCAPE PROGRAM

Our trees were finally planted on Palisade Avenue during the month of December. Approximately 35 ornamental cherry trees, known as prunus kwanzan, were planted on the Avenue between Paterson Plank Road and Franklin Street.

These trees are suited to an urban sidewalk environment because they bear no fruit and have a small root base. The trees will mature to approximately 20-25 feet in height with a spread of 15-20 feet. In the early spring they blossom with a pink flower. Each tree is protected by an iron tree guard and a rain grate.

This treescape program is funded with a CDBG grant. RNA decided to plant this first phase of trees in hopes of encouraging other property owners on Palisade Avenue to take advanage of this free program. Therefore, if any property owner is interested in having a free tree with guard and grate installed in front of their property, please contact RNA or come to our next meeting. There will be a mailing to all Palisade Avenue owners inviting them to participate in this program. A second planting is being planned for 1997.

HOBOKEN FAVORS WESTERN ALIGNMENT FOR WATERFRONT LIGHT RAIL

In December, Hoboken's Mayor and members of the City Council officially announced their support for the placement of the proposed light rail transit system (LRTS) below the Palisade cliffs, where the Conrail tracks are presently located. Conrail is to be relocated, leaving the track bed available for N.J. Transit' construction of the LRTS. A western alignment in Hoboken would provide greater access to the LRTS for the residential communities of Jersey City Heights and Union City. It would also stimulate residential and commercial development of the area in general.

The LRTS will extend 20.6 miles from the Vince Lombardi Park-and-Ride in Ridgefield to Route 440 southerwestern Jersey City, with a southern extension to Bayonne.

RNA participated in the public selection process of the LRTS as a public transportation system for the Hudson waterfront municipalities. It lobbied for the LRTS to run through or adjacent to the Heights and for the construction of stairs or elevators on the cliffs to provide commuter access to it.

RNA will be working with local Hoboken groups to convince N.J.Transit to accept the western alignment. Anyone interested in working on this project, should come to the next meeting.

RNA HOLIDAY SEASON (continued from page one)

council people and members of our neighboring neighborhood associations. Maria Tuzzo surprised our younger guests with special treats. We also had a surprise raffle for gifts contributed by Maria, and Jack and Valerie Rea. All and all, it was a very festive affair.

RNA also went Christmas caroling through the neighborhood on Sunday, December 22nd. A hearty group of young and old singers harmonized the traditional holiday songs. Many neighbors opened their doors and wished the carolers season greetings. Several people even invited the group into their homes for a bit of holiday cheer.

RNA would also like to thank Tony Scarpa of the SDS Bicycle Shop for entertaining the residents with his magic show at the Harbor View Holiday Party on November 22nd. Again, thanks to all the other people who volunteered their time or donated food or gifts to this event.

Finally, RNA would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous new year. We thank you all for your past efforts and hope you will continue to work with us to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood.

HELP FOR THE HOLIDAY BLUES COMES TO JERSEY CITY

Often times, due to prejudice and negative attitudes toward the concept of mental illness, seniors do not seek professional help for depression and other mental disorders. Indeed older persons may not believe that these conditions are treatable.

This is unfortunate, especially during the holidays when sadness can be especially intense. At such times, memories of loss of spouse, family and friends coupled with concerns about worsening health sometimes cause persons to cease trying to cope. At such times, they may slide into depression.

At approximately this time last year, The Franciscan Parkside Center was established to help older persons who are depressed or suffering from other mental disorders. The good news is that treatment is effective about 80% of the time.

Unlike other programs, the Franciscan Parkside Center works with seniors who can have medical as well as emotional disturbances. Admission is totally voluntary and, if the person has Medicare, their stay is covered.

The Center offers several unique community service features to the neighborhood:

a) Community Assessments and referrals done under the supervision of a certified psychiatrist.

b) Access to both medical and psychiatric treatment.

c) Follow-up by your family physician, if this is preferred.

d) Sophisticated diagnostic testing such as CAT scan and MRI.

e) A fully equipped physical therapy department.

f) Post hospital planning which utilizes a continuum of community resources including family therapy, support groups, respite and long-term care.

g) Specialized treatment for severe depression.

When holiday blues are combined with physical problems, as they often are in the elderly, it is good to know that Saint Francis Hospital is ready to offer a safe and secure place for treatment.

If you think you or a loved one could benefit from one or more of these services, call 418-2285. A counselor who speaks both english and spanish, will be available to talk to you about this or a related service.

Rosemary Venter, M.S.W. A.C.S.W.

Memories of My Old Neighborhood:

Not too many newsletters ago, I wrote a story about two good friends of mine. I related how we were always together and how good I was treated by their mother and father. I went almost everywhere with them and knew their relatives and friends. Some nights we told stories and I would make up stories about characters named "lemon and orange".

Time went by and the older friend died and the younger one married and settled in Florida. I heard no more about him. Recently, I was at a feast in Hoboken and someone introduced me to a young man with a family of his own. This man happened to be the son of my friend in Florida.

Jack Rea

CIRCLE OF GREEN ART AUCTION

RNA received a check, in the amount of $93.00 for its participation in the second Circle of Green Art Auction held on Saturday, November 23, 1996 at City Hall. Money raised by this auction was distributed between the participating neighborhood groups to spend on their community garden projects. The other groups include the William Mercado Memorial Garden, the Garden Pre-School Cooperative, the Van Vorst Alliance, the Liberty State Park Conservancy, the Paulus Hook Association and the Friends of Van Vorst Park. A third art auction is being planned for November of 1997.

MEETING MINUTES: November 12, 1996

November's meeting focused on RNA business.

1) ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a) Planning for RNA's holiday party for the residents of Harbor View Health Care Center (where we hold our meetings), to be held on November 22.

b) During November and December, collections of non-perishable food, toys, and money for the annual Food & Toy Drive will be taken during the RNA meetings. Toys should be in good condition. Food should be dry or canned. Donations of money can be designated for food, toys, or both.

c) RNA's own pot-luck holiday party will be held during the December 10 meeting. Please bring food or drinks (no alcohol), and be sure to bring a friend.

d) November 15 will be a dumpster weekend, with containers placed on South Street and Ferry Street, between Palisade and Ogden.

e) Leaf pickups for this season are on the 5th and 19th of December.

f) Planning is underway for neighborhood Christmas caroling.

g) The 'Circle of Green', a coalition of Jersey City parks & gardening groups, will hold an art auction at City Hall on November 23. Part of the proceeds go to RNA's Park Fund.

2) RNA VOTES:

a) A motion was made, and unanimously passed, to contribute $50, in memory of Gert Bogdan, to a research facility for cancer (of the family's choice).

b) A motion was made, and unanimously passed, to contribute $50 to support the Christopher Columbus Drive mural project (described at October's meeting by Leon Yost). This donation goes towards a matching fund to augment federal grant money.

c) A motion was made, and unanimously passed, to reimburse Maria Tuzzo $20 for two Mass Cards, sent to the families in memory of Gert Bogden and Barbara Richards.

d) Also, $100 was allocated for postage for the newsletter.

3) POLICE REPORT:

Officer Scott Schnee took questions and comments from the members:

a) Concerns were expressed about garbage piling up in a garage on Paterson Plank Road, next to a shack where a man has been living for several months; health issues and the danger of fire on the cliffside are a worry to neighbors.

b) Several summonses have been issued to two tow trucks that are regularly parked overnight on Ogden Avenue in the Park.

c) Activity on the street at Congress and Palisade - loud parties at the Caribbean Nights bar, drug dealing on the corner, and children, teens and adults hanging around on the corner.

d) Officer Schnee said the teen curfew seems effective so far, but noted that the Heights is usually quiet anyway. There is a special enforcement unit for the curfew, and it covers those under the age of 17 only.

e) Vandalism on Halloween - a crowd of kids went down Ogden Avenue, breaking car windows and overturning one car.

f) Call priorities and police response times were also discussed.

4) NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT:

Ufredo Merchan and Billy Rodolfos, the two NID managers covering the RNA territory, reported on City agency activities in our area:

a) The City has been having trouble locating the owner of the garage on Paterson Plank Road; they will keep trying, but if unsuccessful, Billy will have the Incinerator clean up. The possibility of condemning the garage was discussed. Billy will have more information by the next meeting.

b) Work orders have been written up for cliffside cleaning. The normal one-month wait for such jobs has already passed with no action by the City.

c) The City's Abandoned Buildings unit is starting a new project, where owners are given one year to fix their properties or the City will take over. It was noted by the members that several of our problem buildings have been burned out and abandoned for two, three, and even five years already.

d) The NID managers, when asked, said that RNA can write to express their priorities and concerns about the NID managers, to Kevin Sluka (Director of Dept. of Public Works), and to Mayor Schundler.

e) Fencing has been put up around the old Exxon station at Palisade and Congress. Negotiations are under way for the City to obtain this property, to construct a new fire house.

f) Construction is going on above the old Palisade Avenue fire house, where a new story is being added. Concerns were expressed that the work may be going on without proper zoning approvals.

g) The Palisade Avenue trees should be planted 'this week'. There were concerns that with further delay it would be too late in the season to plant.

h) A continuous mountain of garbage was reported on the sidewalk adjacent to 202-204 Ogden Avenue.

A part time position has been approved for a park custodian for Riverview Fisk Park. Duties include landscaping, pavilion maintenance, helping with the garden and ball courts. Candidates are being interviewed.

[**Billy Rodolfos** can be reached through his voice mail, **547-4974, extension 8021. Ufredo Merchan** can be reached through his voice mail, **547-4974, extension 8015.**]

5) GROUP DISCUSSION:

Neighborhood issues, and RNA's involvement and avenues for action, were discussed for the remainder of the meeting. Among the topics discussed:

a) The City's lack of success in addressing the problem of abandoned buildings.

b) RNA membership and recruitment techniques (including complimentary newsletters, personal introductions, NID manager contacts).

c) Sports activities.

d) Youth involvement in the community and in RNA, and questions as to whether youth can participate in RNA meetings and activities.

e) Palisade Avenue improvements - trash cans, new businesses.

f) Jersey City's "Master Plan" project, which needs volunteers from RNA.

g) Strategies for getting results.

This discussion will be resumed at the January meeting.

Cathy Packard, Secretary

☞ RECYCLE: IT'S THE LAW!

Here is the official list of recyclable materials that are collected in our neighborhood every WEDNESDAY:

PAPER: NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, CARDBOARD, BOXES, MAIL, PAPER, TELEPHONE BOOKS
PLASTICS: BOTTLES, MILK CONTAINERS, WATER CONTAINERS, FOOD BOTTLES
GLASS: SODA or BEER BOTTLES, JARS
CANS: ALUMINUM, TIN, STEEL (NO CHEMICAL OR PAINT CANS).

Remember, paper products should be separate but glass, plastic, and metal can be grouped together. For more information, call the Incinerator Authority at 432-4645.

Bulletin board

RNA MEMBERSHIP

It's a new year and time to renew your membership in RNA by paying your annual dues of **$5.00**. Support the work of your local neighborhood association in its efforts to improve the quality of life in our community. Membership in RNA entitles you to nine issues of our newsletter, and if you live within the boundaries, voting privileges in the organization. Pay your dues at the next meeting, or send a check, payable to RNA, to 232 Ogden Avenue.

From Valerie's Kitchen:

Homemade Cream Puffs

INGREDIENTS:

3 or 4 Quart saucepan
1 Cup Water
1 stick Margarine or Butter
1 Cup Flour
4 Eggs

Filling:

1 Box of Jello Instant Vanilla Pudding
1/2 Pint Heavy Cream
3/4 -1 Cup Milk
Powdered Sugar

1) Put water in saucepan. Melt margarine in water.
2) Drop in one cup of flour and stir until it forms a ball.
3) Remove from stove and add four eggs - one at a time into mixture.
4) Drop by tablespoon onto cookie sheet.
5) Bake in preheated oven at 425 degrees for 20 minutes.
6) Turn down oven to 325 degrees for another 20 minutes.
7) Remove from oven and cool. When cooled, cut tops off of puffs.
8) Combine filling ingredients. Beat well.
9) When done, refrigerate.
10) Add filling to puffs and add powdered sugar on top.

JANUARY

The birds are in the trees,
The weather is beautiful,
Holidays have passed,
Spirits are high
And Spring cannot be far behind -
Keep Smiling!

Madeline Rea

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR NEWSLETTER

Drop off articles, comments and/or recipes in the mailbox, attached to the gate, at 232 Ogden Ave. Mark the envelope, "RNA NEWSLETTER." The next deadline is **Friday, January 24, 1997.**

POLICEBEAT

Residents can contact their **Community Service Police Officers Scott Schnee and Lorenzo Tosado** or **Mark Conroy and Keith Armstrong** if they have a problem, a safety concern or knowledge of criminal activity at **547-5350** (the North District station's frontdesk) or **547-5719** (community service number). When leaving a message, include your name, telephone number, street address, the nature of the problem and a date and time of the message.

In addition, anyone with information about illegal drug use and/or drug dealing, should contact the JCPD Narcotics Unit at 547-5391. Ask to speak to Sgt. Jimmy Melendez of the North District. All calls will be strictly confidential.

A **Community Service Survey** form is reprinted below. The purpose of the form is to alert the police to particular chronic problems in our neighborhood. Please fill the form out and mail it to the North District at 282 Central Avenue. (You can remain anonymous.)

JERSEY CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
NORTH DISTRICT
282 Central Avenue, Jersey City, 07307
547-5350: Front Desk
547-5719: Community Service

Community Service Survey

Residence_____School_____Business_____
Name:_____ CSO Post#_____
Address:_____ CSO Name:_____
Home Phone (optional):_____
Business/School Phone:_____

PROBLEMS/CONCERNS:

Disorderly Groups_____	Drug Activity_____
Loud Music_____	Abandoned Bldg_____
Traffic Conditions_____	Abandoned Cars_____
Parking Complaints_____	Noise Complaints_____
Animal Complaints_____	Other(Specify below)__

Other Problems: _____
_____
Locations:_____
_____
Comments:_____
_____

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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SEE YOU AT OUR NEXT MEETING ON
January 14th at 7:15 PM at the
HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER.

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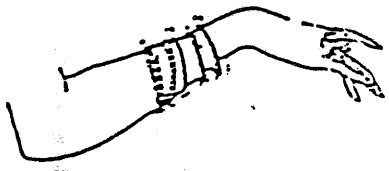

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MLS

Start the NEW YEAR by Talking with your Neighbors
and Improving your Community at the next RNA
meeting on Tuesday, JANUARY 14th at 7:15 PM

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
232 OGDEN AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY 07307

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RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RNA

Vito Brunetti
Chairperson

Greg Brickey
Vice-chairperson

Kathy Packard
Secretary

Jack Rea
Treasurer

Carol Rebelowski
Sgt. at Arms

COMING EVENTS

RNA MEETING: Tuesday, January 14th at 7:15 PM
LOCATION: THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER

1) **Guest Speaker: Captain Donald Myers, Commander of the North District Police**

2) **Group Discussion: Continuation of RNA's self-evaluation of its 1996 projects and proposals for 1997 activities**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE
RIVERVIEW COMMUNITY GARDENS
(It's never to early to start planning for the spring planting season! Come to the January 14th Meeting.)